



At Your Window by **Kitkat39612**

Category: Stranger Things, 2016

Language: English

Characters: Eleven/Jane H., Mike W.

Status: Completed

Published: 2018-04-21 09:38:54

Updated: 2018-04-21 09:38:54

Packaged: 2019-12-16 23:04:39

Rating: K

Chapters: 1

Words: 1,053

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: The house next to Mike Wheeler's has been for sale for months. Now, the new owners have moved in. Mike sees his strange new neighbour sitting on the roof, and decides to say hello. Short one-shot.

At Your Window

Hi. This is just a short one-shot I thought you'd enjoy. I'm not sticking entirely to canon with Eleven's backstory, so El will have a wider vocabulary. I also thought it would be nice to give it a Skellig feel- also, if you haven't read Skellig, I strongly recommend it. It's by David Almond and should be available in most places.

Okay, end of announcements. Enjoy!

There was a girl at the window.

Mike watched her, unsure exactly what to do. The house had been empty until that morning; then the moving van had pulled up and suddenly, the Wheeler's had a new next-door-neighbour.

The girl was sat on the ledge, cross legged. She hadn't seen Mike yet; her eyes were fixed on the sky.

Carefully, Mike put down the Millennium Falcon model he was holding, and pushed open his window.

`Hi,' he said.

The girl yelped and almost toppled backwards. Instinctively Mike reached out to grab her, but she steadied on her own.

`What was that for?' She gasped, clinging to the ledge.

`Sorry,' Mike said quickly. `I-I didn't mean to scare you. I was just trying to be friendly.'

`By almost causing me to plunge to my death?'

`Uh- I guess.'

The girl looked at him incredulously. Then her lips twitched, and she let out a giggle. `You're funny,' she told him.

A fluttery feeling was growing in Mike's stomach. It wasn't butterflies. It felt more like *pigeons*, if anything. He fumbled for anything to say, and finally ended up with: 'I'm Michael Wheeler. But everyone calls me Mike. Where're you from?'

The girl shifted. 'Chicago. Dad needed us to move.'

'Can I ask why?' At his question, the girl looked down into her lap.

'I might tell you... some day.' She fixed him with a piercing look. 'You seem different. I thought you'd be boring. But you're not.'

Mike wasn't sure what to say to that. Then he decided their location was too odd to have a proper conversation, with him hanging out of the window and her sitting on the roof.

The girl leaned forward. 'What are you doing?'

'I thought we should probably be on the same level.' Mike gripped the window frame, pulled himself out, and settled down on the roof. Now they were only a metre or so apart. Certainly no more than an arm's length.

Pink streaks smoothed across the sky, tinting the base of the clouds. The sun hung at the horizon. No wonder the girl had been so entranced.

'It's beautiful, isn't it?'

It was as if the girl had read his mind. 'Yeah,' Mike agreed. 'I don't look at the sky much anymore.'

The girl tilted her head. 'Why not?'

'You know. Comic books. Arcade. School. Don't get much time.' Mike shrugged lightly; what can you do?

'I don't go to school. Dad's homeschooling me.' The girl's head was still cocked to the side. With the way she was perched, and with her tiny stature, she could easily have been likened to a bird. 'You should look at the sky more. It'll go soon.'

As she spoke, the sun began to slip beneath the horizon. The girl nodded, as if to say, *see?*

‘What do you mean, it’ll go soon?’ Mike found this girl intriguing and unsettling in equal measure.

She turned her unblinking gaze on him. ‘Pollution. Ozone crisis. For all we know, by the time we’re grown-ups, humans will have filled the world with metal and plastic. If we don’t enjoy it now, we might never get a chance.’

A weird quiver went through Mike at her words. ‘You know, technology isn’t all bad.’

‘It isn’t?’

‘No.’ For some reason, Mike wanted to challenge this girl. ‘Dishwashers. Cars. Computers. With technology to do things for us, we have time to look at the sky.’

Neither of them spoke. A strange feeling hung in the empty space between their two houses. It was like the rests in between piano notes, where one chord still quivers on the air, held by the sustain pedal.

‘Do you have any siblings?’

Mike groaned. ‘Yeah. Two sisters. It’s awful. Nancy’s probably responsible for the hole in the ozone layer above our house. Walking into her room is like walking into a cloud of hairspray.’ The girl giggled. It spurred Mike to ask another personal question. ‘What about you?’

‘I do have a sister. But she’s still in Chicago.’ The girl looked out at the horizon again. The sun was halfway gone; three black blots flew across it. Birds.

‘Did you know, birds evolved from dinosaurs?’ Mike was back in his own territory now. ‘When the asteroid killed the dinosaurs, birds evolved from the ones that were left.’

‘I didn’t know that.’ The girl stared back at the birds, eyes wide with

new knowledge. `Nothing ever really dies, does it? It just becomes something new.'

`Something better, usually.'

`What do we become when we die? Do we just stop? Or do we change, like the dinosaurs did?'

Mike shrugged helplessly. `I don't know. I think we just... die.'

Chirps filled the air around them. Hundreds of starlings soared over their heads. `I think we become them,' the girl said softly.

A single feather fell down through the sky. Mike watched it. It glowed green and blue in the disappearing light.

It landed right in the girl's lap. The girl smiled and picked it up. She held it to her eyes.

Then leaned over the gap. Mike leaned forward to meet her, to catch her, if necessary.

The girl touched his cheek, then tucked the feather into his palm.

`It's good luck,' she whispered.

Mike couldn't remember how to speak.

The girl flitted back to her perch. `Goodbye, Mike Wheeler,' she called, beginning to climb back inside.

`Wait!' Mike had forgotten to ask her the most fundamental thing in the world. `What's your name?'

The girl turned back. `El Hopper.' She breathed, from the shadow of her room. `My name's El Hopper.'

`Bye. El Hopper.'

She smiled. And then she was gone.